



Cerro Pelado Fire Update Saturday, May 7, 2022

Hours: 8 a.m. - 8 p.m. **Phone:** 505-312-4593 **Email:** 2022.CerroPelado@firenet.gov
InciWeb: <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/8075/> **Twitter:** <https://twitter.com/SantafeNF>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/2022.Cerropeladofire>

Acreage: 34,671 acres **Containment:** 11%

Personnel and Equipment: 837 total personnel; 38 engines, 6 Type 1 hand crews, 11 Type 2 hand crews, 5 Type 2 initial attack crews, 9 helicopters, 2 scooper planes, 10 dozers, 1 masticator, 2 ambulances, 1 rapid medical extraction unit and 15 water tenders. Air National Guard helicopters are on standby.

Yesterday: Firefighters working along Highway 4 on the northeast side have completed thinning dense brush, trees, and made significant progress with tactical burns, making that corner of the fire secure. U.S. Department of Energy masticators continued to grind up burnable vegetation along Highway 4 west of the tactical burns. Highway 4 remains closed from mile marker 34 to mile marker 50. Crews continued patrol on the northwest corner of the fire. Handcrews secured the spot fire from Thursday on the west side of the fire and north of Meadow helicopter dip site. The spot has become part of the west burn perimeter. There was fireline constructed to connect the finger extending out of the fire on the southwest corner. Tactical firing was used to protect the old growth, by keeping fire intensity low. On the south side of the fire, further adjustments were made with dozers to straighten lines along Forest Road (FR) 270. Fuels on the south side of the fire are sparse, and the only fire occurred in draws where there were some downed fuels to burn. The southwest corner of the fire had little movement, advancing only when drainages with timber had some fuel to consume. On the eastern side of the fire FR 289 will be considered a primary line as the fire continued to slowly burn through sparse fuels in the steep canyons. Most eastward movement was slow, with the only progression occurring in steep canyons. Fuels are sparse, with progression only in drainages and when winds align with those canyons. Operations noted there were no attempts to build fireline on the western perimeter by hand as the ground is extremely steep and would compromise firefighter safety. FR 289 has been prepped and plumbed with extensive hose lines. Fire operations had also indicated roads further east were being prepped as contingency lines. No new structural losses were reported. Super scooper planes continued to drop water from Cochiti Lake and secured Rabbit Mountain and Cochiti Mesa. Coordination continued between the Incident Team and the Pueblo of Jemez and the Pueblo of Cochiti to prepare routes, with some dozer lines being used to straighten the line as the fire slowly progresses southward. Safety and operations reported no significant firefighter injuries. AM Radio 1610 was designated to operate as a public service to give news of firefighting efforts.

Today: Firefighters will continue to work along the perimeter of the fire along Highway 4 on the north, Forest Road (FR) 266 on the west, FR 270 on the south, and FR 289 on the east to improve firelines with thinning and chipping. Tactical firing will be used to improve firelines along the northeast corner and eastern perimeter of the fire, along the Alamo Trail from Highway 4 to FR 289. Masticators from the U.S. Department of Energy will continue to grind vegetation along Highway 4. Firefighters fully plumbed the northeast and eastern perimeter and expect to do tactical burning. Firefighters will also coordinate with the National Park Service in this area for structure protection for Bandelier National Monument and Valles Caldera National Preserve. Structure protection has continued in this area and the structural group has been moving through all areas with homes and structures. Firefighters will continue coordination with the Pueblo of Cochiti and are still assessing and providing protection for structures in the Cochiti Lake area. Containment and mop up of the 30 acre spot fire on the southwest part of the fire will continue today.

Weather and Fire Behavior: Today's weather features a Red Flag Warning due to gusty winds up to 35 mph and low relative humidity in the single digits. Temperatures will be in the mid-70s. Weather predictions are expecting near historic levels of wind over the next 4 days. Expect flanking fire on the north, with active fire near Kitty Lake. The fire is expected to continue backing on the west side of the fire towards containment lines on FR266. As the fire moves southeast and east, there is potential for rapid fire spread especially if winds align with drainages. In the northeast, winds may align with canyons and there is potential for high spread rates. The east side of the fire has the greatest potential for fire growth up to 5 miles if it exceeds suppression action. Fire spread potential for the south side is expected to slow with backing fire, and is moving to containment lines.

Evacuations, Shelter Areas: The communities of Cochiti Mesa and the Peralta Canyon area, including Cox Ranch, remain under a "Go" evacuation status. The Sandoval County Fire Department and Emergency Management will provide updated information on evacuations, as needed. Evacuations for Sierra de Los Pinos, Valles Caldera National Preserve remain in "Set" mode, meaning being ready to leave at a moment's notice. If conditions change and the fire threatens the community again, these areas could return to "Go." Los Alamos County, Jemez Springs, La Cueva and Cochiti Lake area remain in "Ready" status.

Air quality: Information on air quality is at New Mexico Department of Health Environmental Public Health Tracking, <https://nmtracking.org/fire>. An interactive smoke map at <https://fire.airnow.gov/> allows you to zoom into your area to see the latest smoke conditions.

Closures: Highway 4 remains closed to all traffic from mile marker 34 to mile marker 50 (at the junction of Hwy 4 and 501) due to fire activity. Fire equipment and firefighters will be working along Highway 4 and accessing the fire, especially at intersections with FR 10 and FR 280. Heavy traffic impedes firefighting efforts and endangers firefighter safety. The most updated road closure information can be found here: <https://www.nmroads.com/mapIndex.html>

The Santa Fe National Forest has issued a [closure order](#) for the Cerro Pelado fire area and a second [closure order](#) for the Cerro Pelado Firefighter Camp along FR 376. The purpose of both orders is to protect public health and safety due to extreme fire danger in the Restricted Area. Bandelier National Monument and Valles Caldera National Preserve remain closed due to fire activity until further notice.

Fire Restrictions: [Stage II Fire Restrictions](#) are in effect for the Santa Fe National Forest, which prohibits all campfires and other hazardous activities. Due to ongoing fire threats, Sandoval County will not issue burn permits.

Temporary Flight Restriction: There is a flight restriction on the area over the fire (10 nautical miles southwest of Los Alamos, NOTAM 2/2366). https://tfr.faa.gov/save_pages/detail_2_6919.html. Drones over the fire are also prohibited.